

Inventors: Warren et al.  
Serial Number 09/840,235

PATENT APPLICATION  
Navy Case 82413

**Amendments to the Claims**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

Claims 1-23 (cancelled)

24. (currently amended) An image processing apparatus for processing imaging data in a plurality of spectral bands and fusing the data into a color image, comprising:

[[two]] ~~one~~ or more imaging sensors;

at least [[two]] ~~three~~ image-acquiring sensor areas located on said one or more imaging sensors, wherein each said sensor area is sensitive to a different spectral band than at least one other of said sensor areas and generates an image output representative of an acquired image in the spectral band to which the sensor area is sensitive;

a frame grabber connected to said imaging sensors

a general purpose computer connected to said imaging sensors for executing in real time

a registration algorithm for scaling and registering said image outputs executed ;

and

a color fusion algorithm for combining said image outputs into a single image.

25. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 24, further comprising a screen display.

Inventors: Warren et al.  
Serial Number 09/840,235

PATENT APPLICATION  
Navy Case 82413

26. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 25, further comprising an operator interface for allowing operator input in processing of said image outputs.
27. (currently amended) The apparatus of claim 24, wherein said color fusion algorithm is simple color fusion whereby each said sensor area image output is separately assigned to a different display color based on wavelength.
28. (currently amended) The apparatus of claim 24, wherein said color fusion algorithm is based on principle component color fusion whereby said sensor area outputs are fused into one image.
29. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 28, wherein said principle component color fusion de-saturates said fused output image.
30. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 24, further comprising one or more additional sensors on which some of said plurality of imaging sensor areas are located.

Inventors: Warren et al.  
Serial Number 09/840,235

PATENT APPLICATION  
Navy Case 82413

31. (previously presented) The apparatus of claim 24, wherein said sensors comprise three sensors, and each said sensor is configured to map its image to an associated color channel, and wherein said algorithm is configured to combine said color channels into a color image.

32. (previously presented) The apparatus as in claim 31, wherein said three sensors are respectively sensitive to any combination of visible, near infrared (NIR), short-wave infrared (SWIR), mid-wave infrared (MWIR), long-wave infrared (LWIR) spectral bands.

33. (currently amended) A method for producing a real-time color fused image, comprising the steps of:

providing one or more imaging sensors including at least ~~[[two]]~~ three image-acquiring sensor areas located on said one or more imaging sensors, wherein each said sensor area is sensitive to a different spectral band than at least one other of said sensor areas;

exposing said at least ~~[[two]]~~ three sensor-areas to an image, said at least ~~[[two]]~~ three sensor areas thereby each acquiring said image ~~[[and generating]]~~ and generating an image output representative of said acquired image in the spectral band to which the sensor area is sensitive;

providing a frame grabber for acquiring said image;

scaling said image outputs of said sensor areas;

providing a computer for executing a color fusion algorithm and a registration algorithm;

Inventors: Warren et al.  
Serial Number 09/840,235

PATENT APPLICATION  
Navy Case 82413

registering said image outputs; and  
color fusing said image outputs into a single image.

34. (previously presented) The method as in claim 33, further comprising displaying said image outputs on a screen display.

35. (previously presented) The method as in claim 34, further comprising providing an operator interface for allowing operator input in processing of said image outputs.

36. (currently amended) The method as in claim 33, wherein said color fusing algorithm is simple color fusion whereby each said sensor area image output is separately assigned to a different display color based on wavelength.

37. (currently amended) The method as in claim 33, wherein said color fusing is based on principle component color fusion whereby said sensor area outputs are fused into one image.

38. (previously presented) The method as in claim 33, wherein said image is acquired by three sensors, each said sensor is configured to map its image to an associated color channel, and wherein said fusing combines said color channels into a color image.

Inventors: Warren et al.  
Serial Number 09/840,235

PATENT APPLICATION  
Navy Case 82413

39. (previously presented) The method as in claim 33, wherein said three sensors are respectively sensitive to any combination of visible, near infrared (NIR), short-wave infrared (SWIR), mid-wave infrared (MWIR), long-wave infrared (LWIR) spectral bands.
40. (previously presented) The method as in claim 33, wherein said processing and fusing of said image occurs in real time.